

Blood on Obama's Hands: What Future for Haiti?

by Cynthia R. Rush

Feb. 10—"The entire Enriquillo fault system appears to be seismically active; Haiti and the Dominican Republic should prepare for future devastating earthquakes." A little over a week after the two-year anniversary of the Jan. 12, 2010 earthquake which leveled the island nation of Haiti, a new study led by William Bakun of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) issued the above warning.

Bakun's study explains that the 7.0 quake which killed at least 250,000 people, could mark a new level of seismic activity along the Enriquillo fault, which runs along the southern part of Hispaniola, the island shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic, auguring devastating new quakes for both countries. He and other experts who conducted earlier studies in the months following the 2010 quake concluded that the lack of "sound construction practices" contributed to the horrific destruction and loss of life in Haiti, and warned that unless these practices were remedied, the results of any future quake would be "catastrophic."

Yet thanks to the Obama Administration's imposition of the British Empire's population-reduction policy—genocide—catastrophe is exactly what awaits the Haitian people should a new quake occur.

On Feb. 22, 2010, Lyndon LaRouche proposed that the Obama Administration sign a 25-year bilateral treaty with the Haitian government to rebuild the nation, based on an emergency deployment of the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and other agencies with expertise in responding to natural disasters. Such a treaty should be premised on respect for Haiti's sovereignty, LaRouche underscored, and would constitute a long-term partnership between the two nations to guarantee the survival of the Haitian nation-state and strengthen its ability to care for its suffering people.

As *EIR* reported in October 2010, projects such as the Artibonite Valley Project, envisioned by the Franklin Roosevelt Administration, and often likened to the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in the United States, would be the appropriate approach to Haiti's future de-

velopment—not the "micro-finance" low-cost, "wash your hands" projects that U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is so fond of. Max Massac, an engineer with the Haitian-American Association of Engineers and Scientists, has proposed building several dams as a centerpiece of Haiti's national development.

Reliable sources informed *EIR* in late February 2010 that a group of U.S. "old hands" on Haiti agreed with LaRouche, saying that the USACE should be deployed immediately to evacuate 1 million Haitians to higher ground, and presented the proposal to President Obama.

Obama spat on LaRouche's proposal. After allowing a very short-term deployment of the USACE and medical facilities such as the *U.S.S. Comfort*, he handed the relief effort over to an army of competing non-governmental organizations (NGOs), *which have bypassed the Haitian government altogether*, deeming it too corrupt and unreliable to manage reconstruction. Less than half of the \$5 billion pledged by governments has even been received in Haiti, and only a miserable 1% of that has reached the government.

Where Is the Shelter?

The result? For all but a tiny minority, earthquake-resistant buildings are a distant, unattainable dream. In the midst of a still dangerous cholera epidemic, the majority of Haiti's 10 million citizens spend their days struggling just to obtain the most basic necessities: food, shelter, clean water, and medical care.

Almost 600,000 people still live in the wretched and dangerous camps in Port-au-Prince for Internally Displaced People (IDPs). Lacking sanitation facilities, security, or protection from the island's extreme weather, these are unfit for human habitation, breeding grounds for disease. The British aid agency Oxfam reported in January that a shortfall in funding for sanitation had forced the UN and the official DINEPA agency (National Directorate for Water and Sanitation) to cut back regular de-sludging of camp toilets.

As of October 2011, only 6% of the camps had water services. In November, a government decree halted water trucking service into most camps.

Ken Merten, the U.S. Ambassador in Haiti, and Tom Adams, Haiti special coordinator at the State Department, boast that almost two-thirds of the 1.5 million people who first inhabited the Port-au-Prince camps "have now left." Where did they go?



UN Photo/Sophia Paris

Cholera in Haiti, October 2010. Experts are now expecting a “fourth, fifth, and sixth” wave of the deadly disease, since virtually nothing has been done to clean up the unsanitary conditions that foster its spread.

Two years after the 2010 quake, only 4,769 new homes have been built, and 13,578 homes repaired in the capital. The 96,000 “temporary” shelters (T-shelters) to which some families have been moved are expensive, box-like structures made of wood that can’t withstand Haiti’s fierce weather extremes.

The truth is that forced evictions are the primary reason that families have left the IDP camps, and *not* because they have somewhere else to go. Attacks on camps in the middle of the night by armed thugs are commonplace; residents are removed, given some small sum of money, and told never to return. Some people have chosen to return to their previous unsafe homes rather than endure the camps’ barbaric conditions.

Yet according to Mark Schuller, a Haiti specialist at the City University of New York, even if people’s former homes were tagged as safe to live in, they couldn’t afford to pay rents, which have skyrocketed by a factor of 5-10 since the earthquake.

Sick Animals Aren’t Treated This Way

Despite declining mortality rates overall, the cholera epidemic which broke out in October 2010 is by no means over. When the rainy season begins in March, medical experts on the ground expect to see a “fourth, fifth, and sixth” wave of the disease, which will push

daily infection rates up to 1,000 from the current level of 200. Although official fatality rates are down to 1-2%, for the two-thirds of Haiti that is rural and mountainous, and in which medical care is non-existent, it is impossible to know what the infection or mortality rates are. At best, the incidence of cholera in those regions is greatly underreported.

The outbreak that occurred in early January in the municipality of Pestel in Grand Anse Department on the northern coast of Haiti’s southern peninsula, is a dramatic example of cholera’s reality.

On Jan. 5, the mayor of Pestel reported 200 people ill with cholera, 17 of whom had died that morning, in an area bereft of medical supplies, personnel, or a cholera treatment center. Although an American doctor working for a medical NGO connected to the Haiti Advisory Epidemic System (HEAS) responded immediately to rush in the necessary supplies and personnel, the deaths represented an 8.5% fatality rate, far exceeding any statistics provided by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

This occurred amidst official talk of declining infection rates, and the withdrawal of many medical NGOs due to lack of funding. For 72 hours, PAHO, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and other agencies denied the existence of the cholera outbreak in Pestel.

Dr. John Carroll, an American doctor who partners with HEAS in Haiti, and who provides insightful commentary in his “Dying in Haiti” [blog](#), noted on Jan. 12 that entire families in Pestel were wiped out by cholera, and that something similar had occurred in the mountains of Sud Est Department. “Few believed us during that reporting, but this is what it means to encounter cholera in the 2/3 of Haiti that is rural, mountainous, isolated and ‘not on the grid,’” Carroll noted.

Anger and frustration were also reflected in the

comment of a Florida-based medical professional who characterized the number of Pestel's fatalities as "an unacceptable CFR [Cholera Fatality Rate] after more than one year [since] the beginning of this epidemic. . . . We cannot continue being witnesses to negligent interventions carried out by the UN and its health branch." Another medical expert warned that "the CTC [cholera treatment center] in the Pestel area needs to be reactivated. We need to recruit the necessary number of physicians, nurses, . . . and Community Health Workers to address the medical needs of this outbreak, as a model of what is necessary for communities all over Haiti during the upcoming *fourth, fifth, and sixth waves*" (emphasis added).

As for the often terrible conditions under which cholera patients are treated in remote areas, Dr. Carroll caustically remarked on Jan. 24, "We don't treat our sick animals this way in the States. Do you know any veterinarian who would put your cute pet poodle in a hot dirty tent with an IV while your dog is critically ill?" He noted that when World Health Organization officials came to Pestel, they said "there was not a problem with cholera in Pestel."

On Jan. 12, officials from PAHO, CDC, the Inter-

American Development Bank, and other humanitarian agencies gathered in Washington to announce a partnership with the governments of Haiti and the Dominican Republic to try to improve sanitation and access to drinking water, vowing to extend proper sanitation facilities to at least two-thirds of Haiti's population by 2015. The estimated price tag for this is \$1.1 billion.

In the context of global financial disintegration, and the control exerted over reconstruction by NGOs and the humanitarian relief "industry," there is little optimism on the part of Haitian government officials that the PAHO-CDC announcement will accelerate building the infrastructure the country so desperately needs, and has needed, for decades. As an anguished Father André Sylvestre, the pastor of Robillard parish in Nord Department, pointedly asked Dr. Carroll last December, after witnessing needless cholera deaths due to lack of medical facilities, "How many stupid deaths are waiting to occur before we intervene? How many stupid deaths are waiting to occur before we do something with the CTC in Robillard?"

Telling Haitians to wait until 2015 for clean water is the equivalent of a death sentence.

'LaRouche Revolution' On the Air in Haiti

On Jan. 30, the first edition of "The LaRouche Revolution" aired in French and Creole on Radio Tropical Inter, 95.5 FM, in the city of Cap-Haitian, reaching half the country. Airing Monday through Friday at 2:00 p.m. for one hour, the show features LaRouche associate Jean Philippe Lebleu of the Comité pour la République du Canada and his Haitian collaborator Charles Lukson of Cap-Haitian.

The first show presented the conceptions discussed on LPAC-TV's Jan. 26 "Weekly Report" by Lyndon LaRouche and members of the Basement Research Team, Sky Shields and Ben Denniston. Lebleu reported, "We tried to give a conception of the development of the biosphere compared with the development of human beings. We talked about how the biosphere replaces what it considers obsolete by

a new system of biospheric production. Mankind must follow the same kind of anti-entropic development, otherwise it falls prey to imperialism, which feeds off the populations ignorance of those universal constants."

The hosts stressed the necessity for Haitians to become immortal by participating in a vast space program with the Americans, Russians, Chinese, and Canadians. Luckson and Lebleu admitted they might be pretty old before Haitians get to Mars, "but this is how we dedicate ourselves for the betterment of future generations, and become part of history."

Subsequent shows dealt with who Lyndon LaRouche is and why his movement is critical for the survival of the human species; why Obama must be impeached; Glass-Steagall and the concept of credit; NAWAPA, the Arctic, and space exploration, and "Like the Dinosaurs, the British Empire Must Go Extinct."

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